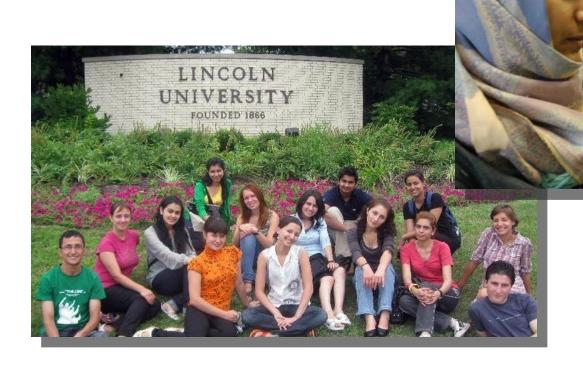


# **Evaluating Educational Exchange** as a Public Diplomacy Initiative



**IREX Education Programs Division** 

June 7, 2011



### **About IREX**

We enable local individuals and institutions to build key elements of a vibrant society:

- –quality education
- -independent media
- -strong communities

To strengthen these sectors, our program activities also include conflict resolution, technology for development, gender, and youth.



## **Work in Public Diplomacy**

- Edmund S. Muskie Graduate Fellowship Program (2005 present)
- Global Undergraduate Exchange Program in Eurasia and Central Asia (2002-present)
- Global Undergraduate Exchange Program in Pakistan (2010-present)
- Teaching Excellence and Achievement Program (2005present)
- International Leaders in Education Program (2005-present)
- Community Solutions Program (2010-present)
- Teachers for Global Classrooms (NEW)



## **Session Overview**

- Challenges to evaluating educational exchanges as public diplomacy initiatives
- Using the right tools and asking the right questions
- 3. Innovative data analysis
- 4. Discussion





### The Case Studies

## Edmund S. Muskie Graduate Fellowship Program

**Overarching Goal**: Promote mutual understanding, build democracy, and foster the transition to market economies in Eurasia through intensive academic study and professional training.



**Program Goal**: Returning Muskie fellows contribute professionally, engage in democratic processes in their home countries, and strengthen relationships between the U.S. and their home countries.



## **The Case Studies**

## Teaching Excellence and Achievement Program International Leaders in Education Program

Overarching Purpose for ECA Teacher Exchange Programs: To improve mutual understanding among teachers, school administrators, and their schools and communities in the U.S. and abroad through professional development and exchange.



**Program Goal**: Students in TEA/ILEP countries (international and U.S.) have enhanced learning outcomes and a globalized learning environment.



## Why Evaluate Public Diplomacy?





## Why Evaluate Public Diplomacy?

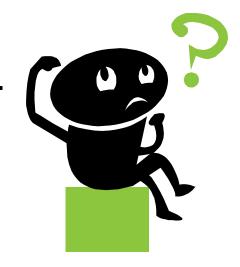
What is the impact of our investment?

How can we learn from our experiences to strengthen program implementation?



## Why Evaluate Public Diplomacy?

How can we measure <u>mutual</u> understanding?



How can we measure the <u>impact of</u> <u>exchanges on a country's development?</u>



## Challenges





## VIDEO CLIP: In a Fellow's Words



Natalya Semyonova Muskie Fellow, 2009



# Challenges to Evaluating Public Diplomacy Programs

- Bias in and limitations of self-reporting
- Getting beyond anecdotes and collecting reliable data
- Accurately measuring attitudinal change
- Linking attitudinal change to behavioral change







...to go beyond self-reporting

Muskie: Indicator –

% positive change in mean of fellows with positive attitudinal changes in 10 indicators of democratic values



## **Muskie Tool: The LEAD Index**

(Leadership, Engagement, and Democracy)

- A set of questions, measured on a Likert Scale (Strongly Agree/Moderately Agree/Moderately Disagree/Undecided).
- Sample Questions for Democratic Values Indicator:
  - All citizens have the right to information about actions and expenditures of public officials.
  - If a community supports one political party, other parties should not be allowed to campaign in that area.
  - All citizens, regardless of educational level and political affiliation, have the right to publically express their opinion.



## Muskie Tool: The LEAD Index

(Leadership, Engagement, and Democracy)

- Online Survey Tool (SurveyMonkey) for quantitative and qualitative data
- Baseline Survey
- Final Survey

Results can be compared to analyze existence of bias



...to get beyond anecdotes

## TEA/ILEP seeks to gather more broad-based evidence to measure our first outcome:

• TEA/ILEP Fellows will serve as cultural ambassadors between their home/host country and the U.S.



# TEA/ILEP Tools for Data Collection

Survey Tool (Survey Monkey)
Baseline Survey
On-going Follow-Up Surveys

Survey	Time of Collection
Baseline	immediately prior to the beginning of the program
Follow-on #1	6 months after program concludes
Follow-on #2	18 months after program concludes
Follow-on #3	42 months after program concludes
Subsequent follow-on surveys	every 24 months thereafter



# TEA/ILEP Tools for Data Collection

### Sample indicators and questions to measure Outcome 1 of TEA/ILEP Program

Outcome 1 –
TEA/ILEP Fellows
(international and
U.S.) serve as
cultural
ambassadors
between their home /
host country and the
U.S.

% increase in TEA/ILEP Fellows (international) who communicate with U.S. educator(s)

% of TEA/ILEP
Fellows who have
altered their
perceptions of U.S.
citizens and culture

Do you currently communicate with a U.S. educator(s)? If so, how often? Once a week, Once a month, A few times a year, Once a year, Less than once a year, Never

What are the first 5 words (positive and/or negative) that come to mind when you think of the people and culture of the United States?



...to measure attitudinal change

**TEA/ILEP**: Indicator

% increase of TEA/ILEP Fellows who have altered their perceptions of U.S. citizens and culture



Sample Wordle derived from total results of the following baseline and postprogram survey question: What are the first 5 word (positive and/or negative) that come to mind when you think of the people and culture of the United States?

Six months after program:





...to link attitudinal change to behavioral change

### **Muskie Program Goal and Indicators:**

Carefully selected behavioral change indicators are developed based on the Program Goal.



## Linking attitudinal change to behavioral change

Muskie Program Goal: Returning Muskie fellows contribute professionally, engage in democratic processes in their home countries, and strengthen relationships between the U.S. and their home countries.

#### **Indicator:**

% increase over baseline for cadre of Muskie alumni serving in a leadership position

#### Indicator:

% of alumni reporting a meaningful contribution to institutional change in their home country

#### **Indicator:**

% of alumni reporting contact and/or collaboration with entities/individuals in the US based on relationships created during fellowship







Muskie: Aggregating and analyzing LEAD Index Data.

- Assign numerical values to Likert scale
- Compile responses in Excel
- Calculate differences in mean from baseline-final
- Analyze findings to identify bias



## **LEAD Index -** Key (Initial) Findings:

13% increase in understanding of democracy

5% increase in leadership competencies

22% increase in key technical skills



## TEA/ILEP: Coding data to identify attitudinal change

Pre and Post- Program Survey Question #1:

List any similarities you know of between your home country and the U.S.

Lessons learned in coding data

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5	0	1		2	1	
6	1	3		3	3	
7	2	5		4	2	
8	3	6		5	28	
9	4	3		Grand Total	34	
10	5	63				
11	Grand Total	81				
12						
	baseline mean			alumni mean		% change =
13	score			score		
14	4.42			4.68		6%
15						



## Closing the Feedback Loop

### How do we use the data?

### Evaluation results can.....

- Inform and inspire funders, partners, stakeholders, and participants about program value and impact.
- Advocate for continued investment with legislators and policy-makers.
- Advise implementers of needed adjustments to program design and implementation.



## **Sharing Inspiring Results**

## Muskie:

# Muskie Fellows Deepen Understand of Democracy:

A 35% increase in the number of fellows who believe that individuals can have direct influence on politicians and political processes.

## **TEA/ILEP:**

## Fellows maintain regular contact with a U.S. educator:

A 35% increase from the baseline survey in the number of ILEP Fellows who communicate with a U.S. educator once a month or more.



## **Strengthening Program Design**

## **TEA/ILEP:**

 Based on qualitative monitoring data collected, IREX created additional materials and tools to better set new participants' expectations for their experience.

## Muskie:

 Given LEAD Index data, IREX incorporated specific leadership content into online learning opportunities. New LEAD Index data will be compared to earlier cohorts to analyze effectiveness of online learning.



## Ongoing Analysis within Evaluation Process

- Experiment and improve systems, tools, and questions.
- Maintain a transparent tracking and data analysis process.
- Be cautious in reporting.



## Discussion

How have you addressed the challenges of evaluating public diplomacy initiatives?



## **Questions?**



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